

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENTS

This Amendment cancels withdrawn Claims 1-29, 49-51 and 53; and adds new Claims 54-61. Support for the amendments is found in the specification and claims as originally filed. In particular, support for Claim 52 is found in Claims 1 and 16 and in the specification at least at [0034]; pages 9-10 and in Figs. 1D, 3A and 3B. Support for new Claims 54-61 is found in Claims 21, 2, 3, 4, 4, 18, 16 and 16, respectively. No new matter would be introduced by entry of these amendments.

Upon entry of these amendments, Claims 52 and 54-61 will be pending in this application. Claim 52 is independent.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Applicants respectfully request entry of the foregoing and reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, in light of the remarks that follow.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended to their representative during the personal interview on December 19, 2007.

As discussed at the personal interview, the present invention provides a method of treating a dielectric film in order to perform at least one of healing, sealing and cleansing the dielectric film. Specification at [0001].

Claim 52 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,570,256 ("Conti"). Conti discloses a carbon-graded layers 22, 24, 26 for improved adhesion of low-k dielectrics to silicon substrate. Conti at title; Fig. 2. Conti discloses that the carbon-graded layers can be prepared employing a multi-step deposition process using different concentrations of gases such as TMCTS and OMCTS. Conti at column 2, lines 57-64.

However, Conti fails to suggest the independent Claim 52 limitation of "etching a portion of said dielectric film so as **to form** in said dielectric film a **sidewall surface**; and exposing said sidewall surface to at least one of TMCTS and OMCTS".

Thus, the rejection over Conti should be withdrawn.

Claim 52 is provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting over Claims 19-20 and 25 of copending Application No. 11/239,294; Claims 1 and 12 of copending Application No. 11/239,291; Claims 19-20 and 25 of copending Application No. 11/239,306; and Claims 1 and 6 of copending Application No. 11/060,352.

However, the applied claims fail to suggest the independent Claim 52 limitation of "etching a portion of said dielectric film so as **to form** in said dielectric film a **sidewall surface**; and exposing said sidewall surface to at least one of TMCTS and OMCTS".

Thus, the provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejections should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request favorable consideration and prompt allowance of the application.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is necessary in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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